DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 052 CS 505 422

AUTHOR Littlefield, Robert S.
TITLE A Comparison of Tabulation Methods at Two National Individual Events Tournaments: The AFA-NIET and the NFA IE Nationals.
PUB DATE [86]
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Debate; *Eligibility; *Interrater Reliability; Judges; *Measurement Techniques; Persuasive Discourse; Public Speaking; *Rating Scales; Research Methodology; Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS *Individual Events (Forensics); Tournaments

ABSTRACT

Comparing the manner in which contestants' scores were tabulated at both the 1985 American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament (AFA-NIET) and National Forensic Association Individual Events Nationals (NFA-IEN), a study (1) examined whether a correlation exists between contestants placing in the quarterfinals with five ranks/five ratings (5R/5R) and those who would have placed with six ranks/six ratings (6R/6R), and (2) replicated an analysis suggesting that the AFA-NIET practice of dropping the low rank and low rating did not significantly alter the group of contestants who would have advanced if all six ranks and ratings had been used. The results of the 1985 NFA-IEN and the AFA-NIET were recalculated using 6R/6R to determine the correlation. Results supported the previous study, indicating that similar groups would have advanced using 6R/6R in the calculation as did using 5R/5R. While contestants advancing to the quarterfinals in each contest were not significantly different, results showed that more were affected by the inclusion of 6R/6R at the NFA-IEN. Findings also showed that there was a greater shift in contestants' overall rankings at the NFA-IEN. (Statistical tables are included.) (JD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert S. Littlefield

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED278052

# A COMPARISON OF TABULATION METHODS AT TWO NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL EVENTS TOURNAMENTS: THE AFA-NIET AND THE NFA IE NATIONALS

Robert S. Littlefield

North Dakota State University

Although research in the area of tournament management has been somewhat neglected, recent attention to this subject area at the 1985 SCA Convention in Denver and the 1986 SCA Convention in Chicago has produced studies addressing issues related to the manner in which a contestant's scores are tabulated. One such study (Littlefield, 1986) suggested that the practice of dropping the low rank and low rating (not necessarily on the same ballot) being utilized by the American Forensic Association at its National Individual Events Tournament did not significantly alter the contestants who would have emerged if all six ranks and ratings would have been counted.

A respondent to the study initially suggested that the two national tournaments being compared (AFA-NIET and Pi Kappa Delta) did not have sufficient numbers of students competing in the various categories to justify the conclusions reached. Therefore, to verify the findings, a national tournament with a larger number of contestants in each event was selected for analysis and comparison. The rationale for this criticism of the original study had at its base the argument that at a larger national tournament, there would be greater chances for atypical ranks or ratings being awarded by the judges. These atypical ranks or ratings would then justify the dropping of the low rank or rating. Also, because



CS505422

of the larger judging pool required at a national tournament with more entries, judging preferences may skew the rankings and ratings even further. By dropping the low rank and low rating, these disparities may be accounted for and the appropriate contestants would advance to the elimination rounds. To find support for this position, the present study is designed to test the following hypothesis:

$H_o$ There is no correlation between contestants placing with six ranks/six ratings (6R/6R) and those placing with five ranks/ five ratings (5R/5R).

$H_1$ There is a correlation between contestants placing with 6R/6R and those placing with 5R/5R.

A high correlation would suggest that there was little difference in the contestants who advanced to quarterfinals. In other words, adding all six ranks and ratings would not have significantly altered the group of contestants advancing to the quarterfinal round. A low correlation would suggest that the dropping of the low rank and low rating makes a difference, resulting in different people advancing in the contest.

## Method of Analysis

To test the hypothesis, the results of the 1985 NFA IE Nationals and the results of the 1985 AFA-NIET were recalculated by adding all six ranks and ratings to determine advancement of contestants to the quarterfinal round. The top 24 contestants after preliminary rounds of both national tournaments had already been determined using the 5R/5R system. The Spearman's Rank Correlation Test (Daniel, 1978) was used to determine if there were correlations between those who advanced using the 5R/5R system and those who would have advanced had all 6R/6R been included.

## Results

Initially, the earlier study had examined the number of contestants moving into and out of quarterfinals using the two-system format (see Table 1). At the IE Nationals, Dramatic Duo, Prose Interpretation, and Expository Speaking experienced the largest number of contestants affected by a change in computational method with three who were in quarterfinals being replaced by three who would have been there had 6R/6R been used. Three events (Poetry Interpretation, Communication Analysis, and Impromptu) had two who had originally advanced to quarterfinals being replaced by two who had been excluded. Three events had one contestant replaced by others who would have benefitted if all 6R/6R had been included. No preliminary results were distributed by the NFA for Dramatic Interpretation in 1985. Therefore, this event was excluded from the analysis.

Determining the quarterfinalists in each category had been completed at both National Tournaments by dropping the low rank and low rating. In this study, the quarterfinalists were reranked by adding all 6R/6R. Based upon pairs of scores for each contestant, Spearman's Rank Correlation was calculated for the different individual events (see Table 2). The correlation coefficients for the events at the AFA-NIET ranged from a low of .6615 (Extemporaneous Speaking) to a high of .9817 (Communication Analysis). At the NFA IE Nationals, the correlation coefficients varied from a low of .5822 (Prose Interpretation) to a high of .9983 (Extemporaneous Speaking). In general, each of the correlation coefficients were strong enough at alpha = .005 to suggest that the inclusion of 6R/6R would not have produced groups of quarterfinalists who varied significantly.

In the original study, the shift in rankings for those contestants moving into or out of the quarterfinalist category in each event varied from 20 to 27. At the NFA tournament, those affected by the inclusion of

all six rankings and ratings varied in rank from 17 to 32 (see Table 3). It is worth noting that by including all scores for each contestant at the IE Nationals, students who had ranked as low as 35th would have been able to move into the quarterfinalist category. These findings support the earlier contention that those placing highest and advancing into quarterfinals in each event would have been relatively unaffected by the inclusion of all 6R/6R and would have retained their "seed" position.

While substantiating the earlier study to the extent that contestants did shift their positions within the quarterfinalist category, the percentage of contestants affected by a change in the seeding through the inclusion of six ranks and six ratings at the IE Nationals was generally at least four percentage points less in each category, with the exception of Poetry Interpretation and Communication Analysis where the percentage affected increased, and Dramatic Interpretation for which no results were available (see Table 4).

## Conclusions

This study has been designed to replicate the earlier analysis which suggested that similar groups of contestants would have emerged into quarterfinal rounds without dropping the low rank and low rating at the AFA-NIET. As the results have indicated, it appears that the alternate hypothesis in this study must be accepted and the conclusion drawn that similar groups would have emerged at the NFA IE Nationals with the inclusion of 6R/6R. Therefore, as in the earlier study, the procedure of dropping the low rank and low rating should be reviewed in terms of its purpose and the time it takes to complete the process.

There are some items that should be noted regarding some degree of variation between the AFA-NIET and the NFA IE Nationals. Initially, while

the groups of contestants advancing to the quarterfinals were not significantly different statistically, more were affected by the inclusion of 6R/6R at the NFA IE Nationals. In addition, there was more of a shift in overall rank for contestants moving into or out of award categories at the NFA IE Nationals. One reason for these results may be the size of the contestant pools (see Table 5). Due to the significantly larger number of contestants in each event at the IE Nationals, one could suggest that there would be a greater chance for variation. Another reason for the difference might be related to the fact that in addition to fewer contestants at the AFA-NIET, those who qualified for that tournament were more homogeneous, in terms of general quality level due to the manner in which they qualified for the tournament.[1] Because it is less difficult to qualify for the NFA IE Nationals, there may be more variation in experience level and consistency of performance for some of the contestants.

The judging variation and style preference concerns may also be factors in the difference between the two national tournaments, as mentioned by critics of the earlier study. Certainly, the "psychological effect" developed in the original study which describes the relief felt by contestants who feared or were concerned about the rankings or ratings of particular judges would be potentially greater at a larger tournament with more contestants and judges.

Directions for future research in this area might address the variation in rankings within the quarterfinal groupings. While seeding has not been shown to be a statistically valid way of predicting the ultimate winners in an event, the use of this procedure might be further discussed and refined or eliminated. The self-reported anxiety on the part of contestants might also be explored when faced with judges who they perceive to be negatively inclined toward them. To further explore the 5R/5R system versus

the 6R/6R system of ranking, it may be useful to study the frequency of the ratings dropped. For example, are ranks of five most often dropped, or is there variation in this area, as well?

The attention currently given to the tournament management tabulation procedures may provide the basis for greater understanding and more consistent application in years to come. Only if we address the reasons why procedures are used will we be able to refine and use them appropriately.

ENDNOTES

[1]At the AFA-NIET, contestants may qualify in an event "at large" by placing at three tournaments with a meld of nine (i.e., 1st place, 2nd place, and 6th place; 2nd place, 3rd place, and 4th place; etc.) if ten schools are participating and the appropriate number of contestants are entered in the event (i.e., 6 contestants for the 1st to count; 15 for the 2nd to count; 20 for the 3rd to count; 25 for the 4th; 30 for the 5th; and 35 for the 6th). In addition, contestants may qualify at a District Tournament where the top 10 percent of the contestants in each event (minimum of three per event) advance to the National Tournament. To qualify for the NFA IE Nationals, a contestant must compete in two preliminary rounds and a final round or finish in the top 10 percent of the contestants in an event with seven schools participating in the tournament. Contestants may not qualify unless twelve contestants are competing in the event. State championships or league contests are exempted from these requirements with prior approval of the executive council.

WORKS CITED

Daniel, W.W. (1978). Applied nonparametric statistics. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Littlefield, R.S. (1986). "Comparison of Tabulation Methods Used by Two 1985 National Forensic Tournaments." National Forensic Journal, 4, (1), 35-43.

Table 1

Movement of Contestants Into and Out of Quarterfinal Round Using Different Methods of Tabulation

| Event Category | AFA-NIET 5R/5R to 6R/6R | | | NFA IE Nationals 5R/5R to 6R/6R | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | out | in | N | out | in |
| Poetry Interpretation | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 2 | 2 |
| Dramatic Duo | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 3 | 3 |
| Communication Analysis | 24 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 2 | 2 |
| Prose Interpretation | 24 | 2 | 2 | 24 | 3 | 3 |
| Expository/Informative | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 3 | 3 |
| After Dinner Speaking | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Impromptu Speaking | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 2 | 2 |
| Persuasive Speaking | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Extemporaneous Speaking | 24 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Dramatic Interpretation | 24 | 1 | 1 | Data unavailable | | |

Table 2

Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test Results

| Event Category | AFA-NIET 5R/5R to 6R/6R | NFA IE Nationals 5R/5R to 6R/6R |
|---|---|---|
| Poetry Interpretation | .9238 | .8886 |
| Dramatic Duo | .9515 | .8591 |
| Communication Analysis | .9817 | .9891 |
| Prose Interpretation | .9514 | .5822 |
| Expository/Informative | .9115 | .9757 |
| After Dinner Speaking | .9361 | .9961 |
| Impromptu Speaking | .8646 | .9843 |
| Persuasive Speaking | .8976 | .9787 |
| Extemporaneous Speaking | .6615 | .9983 |
| Dramatic Interpretation | .9169 | Data unavailable |

Table 3

Shift in Overall Rank for Contestants Moving Into or Out of Award Categories

| Event Category | AFA-NIET | | | NFA IE Nationals | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Contestant | 5R/5R to Rank | 6R/6R Rank | Contestant | 5R/5R to Rank | 6R/6R Rank |
| Poetry Interpretation | A | 24 | 25 | A | 20 | 25 |
| | B | 27 | 23 | B | 23 | 27 |
| | | | | C | 25 | 23 |
| | | | | D | 35 | 22 |
| Dramatic Duo | A | 23 | 25 | A | 22 | 25 |
| | B | 25 | 23 | B | 21 | 26 |
| | | | | C | 23 | 27 |
| | | | | D | 29 | 24 |
| | | | | E | 32 | 17 |
| | | | | F | 35 | 22 |
| Communication Analysis | no shift occurred | | | A | 22 | 25 |
| | | | | B | 24 | 27 |
| | | | | C | 25 | 24 |
| | | | | D | 26 | 23 |
| Prose Interpretation | A | 23 | 25 | A | 23 | 28 |
| | B | 24 | 26 | B | 20 | 31 |
| | C | 25 | 23 | C | 22 | 32 |
| | D | 26 | 20 | D | 27 | 19 |
| | | | | E | 31 | 20 |
| | | | | F | 32 | 21 |
| Expository/Informative | A | 23 | 25 | A | 20 | 27 |
| | B | 25 | 22 | B | 24 | 29 |
| | | | | C | 22 | 30 |
| | | | | D | 25 | 22 |
| | | | | E | 26 | 17 |
| | | | | F | 28 | 19 |
| After Dinner Speaking | A | 23 | 25 | A | 24 | 25 |
| | B | 25 | 23 | B | 26 | 22 |
| Impromptu Speaking | A | 24 | 25 | A | 23 | 26 |
| | B | 25 | 24 | B | 24 | 27 |
| | | | | C | 25 | 23 |
| | | | | D | 29 | 24 |
| Persuasive Speaking | A | 24 | 27 | A | 23 | 25 |
| | B | 26 | 21 | B | 25 | 18 |
| Extemporaneous Speaking | A | 24 | 25 | A | 24 | 26 |
| | B | 26 | 22 | B | 25 | 24 |
| Dramatic Interpretation | A | 22 | 27 | Data unavailable | | |
| | B | 25 | 22 | | | |

Table 4

Percentage of Contestants Experiencing a Change in Ranking Due to the Use of an Alternative Tabulation Method

| Event Category | AFA-NIET 5R/5R to 6R/6R | NFA IE Nationals 5R/5R to 6R/6R |
|---|---|---|
| Poetry Interpretation | 21/24 = 88% | 23/24 = 96% |
| Dramatic Duo | 22/24 = 92% | 20/24 = 83% |
| Communication Analysis | 12/24 = 50% | 22/24 = 92% |
| Prose Interpretation | 23/24 = 96% | 20/24 = 83% |
| Expository/Informative Speaking | 23/24 = 96% | 20/24 = 83% |
| After Dinner Speaking | 20/24 = 83% | 18/24 = 75% |
| Impromptu Speaking | 21/24 = 88% | 18/24 = 75% |
| Persuasive Speaking | 20/24 = 83% | 19/24 = 79% |
| Extemporaneous Speaking | 20/24 = 83% | 19/24 = 79% |
| Dramatic Interpretation | 21/24 = 88% | Data unavailable |

Table 5

Contestants Entered by Event in 1985

| Event Category | AFA-NIET | NFA IE Nationals |
|---|---|---|
| Poetry Interpretation | 112 | 231 |
| Dramatic Duo | 81 | 168 |
| Communication Analysis | 50 | 129 |
| Prose Interpretation | 120 | 282 |
| Expository/Informative Speaking | 87 | 179 |
| After Dinner Speaking | 64 | 164 |
| Impromptu Speaking | 91 | 222 |
| Persuasive Speaking | 81 | 202 |
| Extemporaneous Speaking | 76 | 145 |
| Dramatic Interpretation | 82 | Data unavailable |